

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

February 23, 2017

The Honorable John F. Kelly
Secretary
U.S. Department of Homeland Security
3801 Nebraska Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20016

The Honorable Jeff Sessions
Attorney General
U.S. Department of Justice
950 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20530

The Honorable James B. Comey
Director
Federal Bureau of Investigation
935 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20535

Dear Secretary Kelly, Attorney General Sessions, and Director Comey,

We write to express our deep concern regarding the recent spate of anonymous bomb threats made via telephone against Jewish Community Centers (JCCs) across the nation. We urge the Department of Homeland Security and the Department of Justice to swiftly assess the situation and to advise Congress on what specific steps are being taken, or will be taken, to deter such threats from being made, to identify and prosecute the perpetrators for violations of federal criminal laws, and to enable JCCs to enhance security measures such as physical barriers and guards, in the event that an individual seeks to act upon these threats.

This is not an idle concern, given that there have been at least three casualty-causing attacks at JCCs or other Jewish institutions in the last two decades—in 2014 at a Kansas JCC, in 2006 at the Jewish Federation of Seattle, and in 1999 at a California JCC. This is a national problem and, as such, it requires a national solution.

In the first two months of 2017 alone, there have been 68 incidents targeting 53 JCCs in 26 states, according to JCC Association of North America. A number of JCCs, such as the Roth Family Jewish Community Center of Greater Orlando, have received multiple threats.

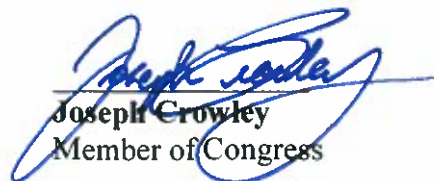
These phone calls have an immediate emotional impact, of course, but they also have an economic impact. JCCs provide a range of educational and community services for Jewish and non-Jewish individuals and families, with a particular focus on children and youth. The individuals who make these calls no doubt recognize that bomb threats, particularly when repeated, can compromise and even destroy a JCC's financial future.

We urge you to approach this issue with a sense of urgency, and to work in partnership with state and territory governments, local law enforcement officials, JCC Association of North America, individual JCCs, and Jewish community institutions and leaders to address the threat in a holistic manner. We look forward to your response regarding the specific steps being taken to prevent and respond to this threat.

Sincerely,



Stephanie Murphy
Member of Congress



Joseph Crowley
Member of Congress



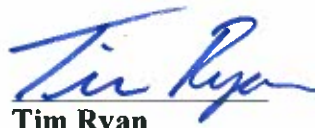
Val Butler Demings
Member of Congress



Daniel M. Donovan, Jr.
Member of Congress



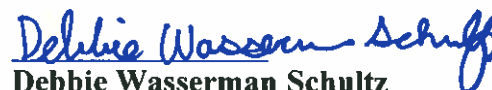
Marcy Kaptur
Member of Congress



Tim Ryan
Member of Congress



Grace Meng
Member of Congress



Debbie Wasserman Schultz
Member of Congress



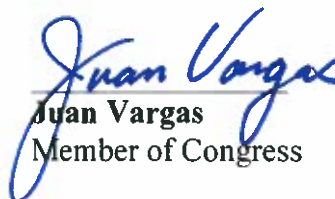
Steve Cohen
Member of Congress



Nydia M. Velázquez
Member of Congress



Alcee L. Hastings
Member of Congress



Juan Vargas
Member of Congress

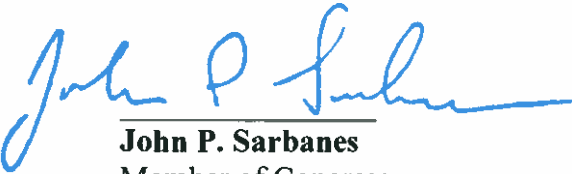

Jimmy Panetta
Member of Congress


Sheila Jackson Lee
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Rosa DeLauro
Member of Congress



Leonard Lance
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John Lewis
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John P. Sarbanes
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Kathleen M. Rice
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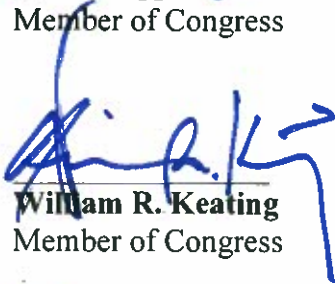
Theodore E. Deutch
Member of Congress



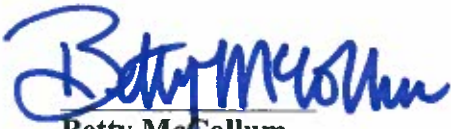
John K. Delaney
Member of Congress



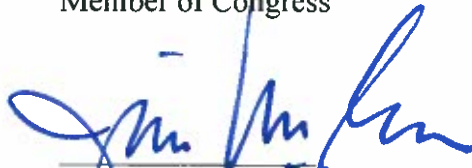
Brian Higgins
Member of Congress



William R. Keating
Member of Congress



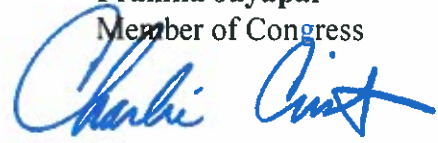
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James P. McGovern
Member of Congress



Pramila Jayapal
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Charlie Crist
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Eleanor Holmes Norton
Member of Congress



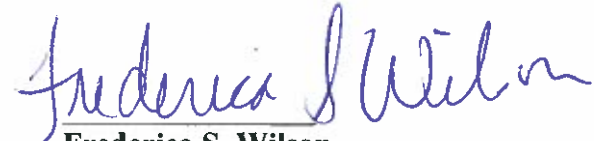
David P. Joyce
Member of Congress



A. Donald McEachin
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Brenda L. Lawrence
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Member of Congress

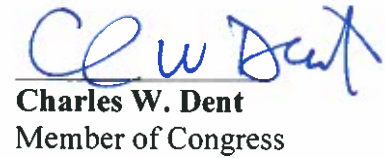


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Eliot L. Engel
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Mario Diaz-Balart
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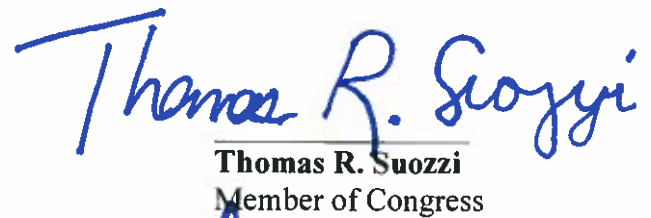

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Kyrsten Sinema
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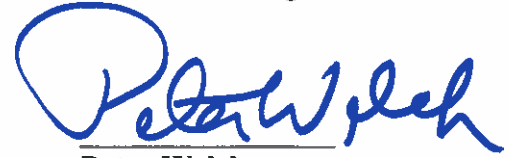

Bill Johnson
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Joe Courtney
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Gerald E. Connolly
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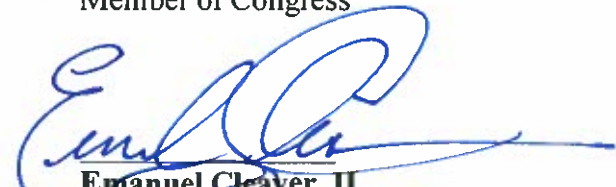

Bonnie Watson Coleman
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Peter Welch
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Donald S. Beyer, Jr.
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Donald Norcross
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Filemon Vela
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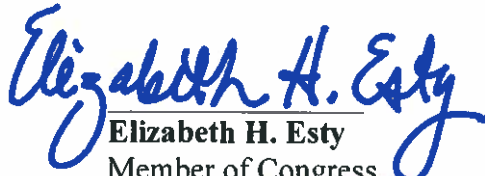

Emanuel Cleaver, II
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Gus M. Bilirakis
Member of Congress

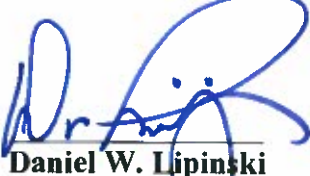

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Sean Patrick Maloney
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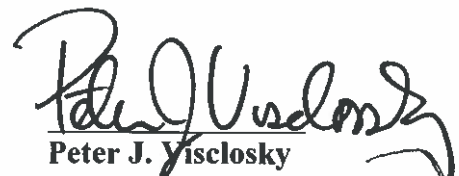

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Keith Ellison
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Eddie Bernice Johnson
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Peter J. Visclosky
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Henry C. "Frank" Johnson, Jr.
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Salud O. Carbajal
Member of Congress



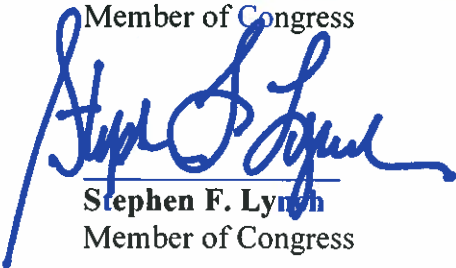
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Mike Thompson
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Stephen F. Lynch
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Julia Brownley
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Terri A. Sewell
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Joyce Beatty
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John J. Faso
Member of Congress



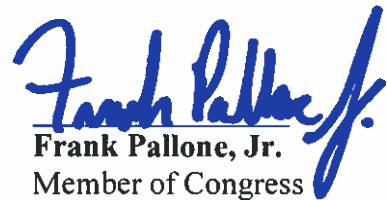
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Doris Matsui
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Frank Pallone, Jr.
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Gene Green
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Adam B. Schiff
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Adriano Espaillat
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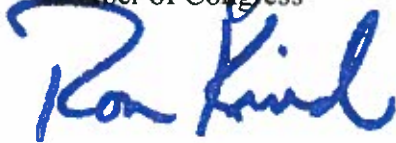
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Raúl M. Grijalva
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Jamie Raskin
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Marc A. Veasey
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Barbara Lee
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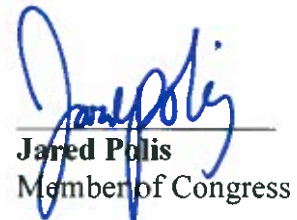
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Ruben Gallego
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Peter J. Roskam
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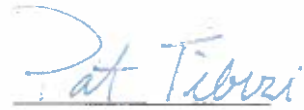
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Richard E. Neal
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Zoe Lofgren
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Vicente Gonzalez
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Patrick J. Tiberi
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Joseph P. Kennedy, III
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Tom O'Halleran
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Mia Love
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Michelle Lujan Grisham
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Steve Stivers
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Al Green
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